SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES PROGRAM

NEWS BRIEF

May 20, 2016

> **TIP OF THE WEEK: The FCC Form 471 application filing window for schools and school districts closes at 11:59 pm EDT next Thursday, May 26.** If you need assistance in creating entities, linking and de-linking entities, or updating your EPC profile information, call CSB at (888) 203-8100 during their extended hours as soon as possible. Be mindful of the times they are busiest (see below).

Extended CSB Hours During the Last Week of the Filing Window

Call: (888) 203-8100

Or online: Submit a customer service case in EPC or Submit a Question

The Client Service Bureau (CSB) will be open the following hours during the last week of the window:

Saturday, May 21 and Sunday, May 22

- 9:00 am – 6:00 pm EDT

Monday, May 23; Tuesday, May 24; and Wednesday, May 25

- 8:00 am – 10:00 pm EDT

Thursday, May 26 at 8:00 am – Friday, May 27 at 12:30 am EDT

Remember that the following times are our busiest:

- Weekdays from 11:00 am – 12:30 pm EDT
- Weekdays from 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm EDT

We encourage you to call with questions as soon as possible so that we can provide answers promptly.

Getting Ready for Direct BEAR Payments

In the May 6 SL News Brief, we provided some information about the direct BEAR payment process. In this issue, we will discuss the first step in this process: filing and certifying an FCC Form 498.

To recap, here are the important changes to the invoice process for applicants. These changes will go into effect on July 1, 2016:

- In order for USAC to process direct payments, USAC must have on file an approved FCC Form 498 certified by the billed entity.
- USAC will pay applicants directly for all funding years. The billed entity must still file an FCC Form 472, Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form, for USAC to process payments.
- Service providers will no longer approve BEAR Forms.
- BEAR Forms will no longer be filed on paper.

Preparing to start the FCC Form 498

Billed entities must have certain information and take certain steps before they can start the FCC Form 498.

1. Set up the necessary permissions.

The account administrator for the organization's account in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC) assigns permissions for two roles: School or Library Official and General Financial Contact.

- A school or library official occupies a position of authority for the applicant. For example, the official could be a superintendent, assistant superintendent, principal, assistant principal, library director, assistant library director, county administrator, district administrator, or state education department or state library lead. The official cannot be a consultant, and must be authorized to certify to the accuracy and completeness of the information on the form.
- A general financial contact is a person authorized to retrieve FCC Form 498 information. He or she can complete but not certify updates to the form.

To set up these permissions, the account administrator logs in to EPC, selects "Manage Users" from the organization's landing page, and then "Manage User Permissions." The permissions for the FCC Form 498 are located in the "498 Permission" column.

2. Locate your federal Employer Identification Number.

In general, schools and libraries already have a federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) or taxpayer identification number (Tax ID). If the billed entity is not a school or library – for example, if a town or county government files program forms on behalf of a school or library that does not control its own finances – use the EIN or Tax ID of the appropriate agency.

3. Locate or obtain a DUNS number.

DUNS, or Data Universal Numbering System, is a proprietary system developed and regulated by Dun & Bradstreet. The DUNS system assigns a unique numeric identifier to a single business entity upon request. Applicants will be required to provide a DUNS number on the FCC Form 498.

Dun and Bradstreet will issue a DUNS number without charge to an entity required to register with the federal government for contracts or grants.

- First, check to see if the billed entity already has a DUNS number. You can check by searching the online D-U-N-S database website or by calling (866) 705-5711.
- If you do not already have a DUNS number, you can apply for one from the D-U-N-S search page above or through the Dun & Bradstreet website.

4. Locate or obtain an FCC Registration Number (FCC RN).

An FCC Registration Number (FCC RN) is required by all entities that do business with the FCC. If you have filed an FCC Form 471 in the last several years, you already have an FCC RN, as you were required to provide it on the form.

If you do not yet have an FCC RN, you can apply for one on the FCC's CORES website. (Note that the FCC uses the term "FRN" for this number, which is coincidentally the same abbreviation used for a funding request number on the FCC Form 471.)

5. Determine which banking account you will use for direct payments.

To identify the bank account which USAC will use to send direct payments, you will be asked to provide three pieces of information:

- Bank name
- Account number – the number assigned by your bank to identify your account
- Routing number – a nine-digit number that identifies the specific bank.

The bank account information provided on the form cannot be for a bank account owned by a consultant.

We encourage each billed entity to file and certify an FCC Form 498. However, in some cases, several

billed entities may want reimbursements from USAC to be deposited in the same bank account. The FCC Form 498 allows the billed entity to list other billed entity numbers that will use the same bank account identified on the FCC Form 498.

6. Locate documentation verifying your bank account information.

USAC will be reaching out to everyone who certifies an FCC Form 498 and asking for documentation that verifies the bank account owner, the routing number, and the account number, such as a canceled check or a bank statement. USAC cannot complete the processing of the FCC Form 498 without this documentation.

After you have completed all of the above steps, you should be ready to file and certify your FCC Form 498.

Last Week in "File Along with Me":

- Ministerial and clerical errors. Read More
- Cardinal changes. Read More

"File Along with Me" is a blog that covers the E-rate Program application process step-by-step, and serves as a schedule you can follow to manage your application. Ready to join us? Read the Blog

Commitments for Funding Year 2015

Funding Year 2015. USAC will release Funding Year (FY) 2015 Wave 51 on May 26. This wave includes commitments for approved requests for all service types and at all discount levels. As of May 20, FY2015 commitments total over $3.28 billion.

On the day the FCDLs are mailed, you can check to see if you have a commitment by using USAC's Automated Search of Commitments tool.